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PREPARING DISADVANTAGED YOUTH FOR WORK.

BUREAU OF EMPLOYMENT SECURITY (DEPT. OF LABOR)

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DESCRIPTORS- *DISADVANTAGED YOUTH, *URBAN DROPOUTS, JOB APPLICATION, BEHAVIOR PATTERNS, JOB APPLICANTS, VOCATIONAL COUNSELING, WORK ATTITUDES, *VOCATIONAL ADJUSTMENT, CHANGING ATTITUDES, *EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS, EMPLOYMENT SERVICES, *VOCATIONAL EDUCATION, JOB PLACEMENT, INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERISTICS, PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA, JEWISH EMPLOYMENT AND VOCATIONAL SERVICE,

FIVE ARTICLES DESCRIBE THE FINDINGS OF A PROJECT DESIGNED TO EVALUATE AND PREPARE SCHOOL DROPOUTS FOR TRAINING OR JOBS. THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE PROVIDED AN INITIAL INTAKE INTERVIEW TO EVALUATE EACH OF THE 450 SELECTED YOUTHS, ALL LIVING IN NORTH PHILADELPHIA. IN SPITE OF THIS, HALF OF THE YOUTH REJECTED THE OFFER TO ENTER ADJUSTMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAMS. THE 165 WHO COMPLETED THE PROGRAMS PROVIDED BY THE JEWISH EMPLOYMENT AND VOCATIONAL SERVICE WERE ALL PLACED IN COMPETITIVE EMPLOYMENT. "JOBSEEKING PATTERNS OF DISADVANTAGED YOUTH" DESCRIBES THE FINDINGS OF THE INITIAL INTAKE INTERVIEWS. "COUNSELING AND WORK ADJUSTMENT" DESCRIBES THE SUPPORTIVE AND REINFORCING FUNCTION OF COUNSELING IN HELPING THE ENROLLEE TO DEVELOP A WORKER SELF-CONCEPT REFLECTING PERSONAL STATUS AND VOCATIONAL GOALS AND WAYS TO ACHIEVE THEM. "WORK ADJUSTMENT TRAINING" DESCRIBES THE WORK SYSTEM OF INCREASING THE COMPLEXITY OF TASKS DISTRIBUTED INTO BROAD OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES. "THE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE COOPERATES" DISCUSSES THE 252 PLACEMENTS BY THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE EMPLOYMENT SERVICES FOR THE 165 YOUTHS WHO COMPLETED THE TRAINING. "THE FAILURE CASES IN A VOCATIONAL PROGRAM" DISCUSSES CHARACTERISTICS OF MALE AND FEMALE DROPOUTS AND TERMINATED MALES AND FEMALES. THESE ARTICLES ARE REPRINTS FROM THE "EMPLOYMENT SERVICE REVIEW," NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER 1965, AND JANUARY, MARCH, APRIL 1966. (EM)

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reprints from the EMPLOYMENT SERVICE REVIEW

I. Jobseeking Patterns of Disadvantaged Youth
II. Counseling and Work Adjustment
III. Work Adjustment Training
IV. The Employment Service Cooperates
V. The Failure Cases in a Vocational Development Program

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CONTENTS

Preparing Disadvantaged Youth for Work

I--Jobseeking Patterns of Disadvantaged Youth, November 1965 1

II--Counseling and Work Adjustment, December 1965 4

III--Work Adjustment Training, January 1966 7

IV--The Employment Service Cooperates, March 1966 11

V--The Failure Cases in a Vocational Development Program, April 1966 13

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Preparing Disadvantaged Youth for Work—I

This article is the first in a series that will describe the findings of a project designed to evaluate and prepare a group of school dropouts for training or jobs. The project was under the supervision of the Philadelphia Council for Community Advancement, with services performed by the Jewish Employment and Vocational Service (JEVS) and the local offices of the Pennsylvania State Employment Service (PSES). Financial support for the project was provided by the Office of Manpower, Automation and Training of the U.S. Department of Labor.

The 450 youths selected for study lived in the section of North Philadelphia that has sometimes been referred to by popular writers as the "jungle." High proportions of unemployment, school dropouts, poverty, dependency, crime, delinquency, illegitimacy, illiteracy, and inferior housing reflect the depressed condition of the area. All had in common a lack of direction and commitment to finding and holding a steady job. Notable changes in motivation, and a heightened desire to secure a job and an occupational identity and classification occurred for many of the youth after they received JEVS work adjustment services.

The articles to follow will describe the counseling and work adjustment program (JEVS) and the job placement experience (PSES) of the project. They will appear in subsequent issues of the REVIEW.

It is hoped that the findings of this study will contribute new information regarding the behavior of disadvantaged youth and assist agencies serving disadvantaged youth to find more effective ways of reaching and influencing them.

Jobseeking Patterns of Disadvantaged Youth

SAUL S. LESHNER
and GEORGE S. SNYDERMAN

All of the youths were interviewed by PSES counselors prior to their selection for the project. The first series of questions posed to each youth was aimed at revealing his insight into his problem. They were not asked in any particular order, and the youth was permitted to ventilate all his feelings without interruption. The following points were explored: What does he think is keeping him from finding suitable work? How does he view his occupational future? What does he think he ought to do about it?

As might be expected, some of the reasons given overlapped or were implicit in others. Forty-three said they "lacked training," 63 said they "lacked a high school diploma," 56 coupled training with experience, and 24 coupled lack of training and experience. Another 24 said they were "not qualified for anything." It is evident that many of these school dropouts believed that their failure to find jobs was somewhat related to their failure to complete school or, at least, to acquire a salable skill while in school. Others were so passive as to seem unresponsive or impervious to any stimulation aimed at helping them. Twelve girls said they were unemployed because they were pregnant, and 6 girls had to stay home to care for their children, 19 youth said their "delinquency record" was held against them by employers. Three youth said they had looked for the wrong job, 138 youth admitted that they did not seriously look for work, and 9 said they did not know why they were unemployed.

Regardless of length of unemployment, only 84 (19 percent) of the 450 youth had made one or more contacts with an employer per week; 39 percent never made a single contact; and only 4 percent made more than five contacts per week. It appeared, however, that the longer the period of unemployment, the less the youth engaged in job seeking activities. Evidently, the youth's motivation and ability to direct his energies toward seeking a job lesson as the length of unemployment increases.

Kinds of Jobs Sought

Nearly half (46 percent) of the youth were unable to express any kind of job preference. When responses indicating a preference were grouped and examined according to such variables as skill content, opportunity to acquire training, possibilities for upgrading, and work environment, the choices were, in fact, realistic. Only one boy said he had been seeking

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what might appear to be an unrealistic job opportunity: e.g., acting.

The youth who could state their preferences most frequently were seeking low level jobs. In the main, these were the types of jobs which nonwhites with meager educational attainment could actually get. Traditionally, these were the jobs in which relatives and friends were employed. They required little skill, were of poor to fair working conditions, offered little chance for advancement. Even the so-called "semiskilled" jobs to which the youth aspired were repetitive in nature or required persons able to "serve others." This seems to contradict some statements in the literature which point out that "lower class" youth set high values on occupations related to athletics and entertainment.

Significant also is the fact that 45 percent of the youth could state only one kind of a job that they were seeking as a first choice; 60 percent could not state a second choice; and 70 percent could not state a third choice. When these are added to the numbers who were seeking "any kind of work," there is additional evidence of the deep uncertainty and almost blind groping of these youth in attempting to deal with their job problems.

In line with the commonly held view of disadvantaged youth, our findings indicate that most of these youth could not make a vocational choice. Where they could, the choice was usually concrete and realistic.

Where They Applied

Possibilities for job-finding and upgrading were also limited because of the types of establishment to which the youth applied for work. Twenty-two percent made their first application at a factory. They seemed to have vague notions about what they wanted to or could do. Some seem to have been seeking jobs which exist in limited numbers in factories, e.g., janitors, stock and shipping, etc. From the youth's point of view, working in a factory meant better pay rates and working conditions.

Forty-three youth applied at hospitals or nursing homes; nearly all were girls who felt that these establishments were less likely to insist that applicants be high school graduates or have specific training. More than half of these youth had been "steered" to the prospective employers by friends or relatives. Several said that the free meals given to workers more than offset the lower wages than in other industries.

Forty youngsters said they first applied to "stores," usually small retail or variety shops situated in the neighborhood in which they lived. Twenty-five other youth applied at food and grocery stores, but in their immediate neighborhoods; only two applied at the large chain stores. Twenty-one more youth applied at department stores, but 18 told the PSES counselor they did not expect to be hired.

Thirty of the youth who appeared to be interested in securing work in the retail trade were further interviewed at some length by JEVS counselors. These boys and girls said they had not applied at department stores or large chain stores because they did not have a high school diploma, or they did not have proper clothing, or they did not think they could pass the tests.

Perhaps more revealing is the fact that of those youth who did apply for jobs in retail trade, very few tried for sales or cashiering jobs. Most looked for jobs with duties like "filling shelves," "unpacking crates," "delivery," "sweeping up," etc. They said they were "playing it safe" and looking for work which they could do and for which nonwhites are acceptable. Few of the youth were seeking "white-collar" or clerical openings; only four applied for jobs in offices.

How Job Sources Were Selected

Although all of these youth needed considerable assistance in finding a job, only 15 went first to an employment office, public or private. All 15, at the time of their initial application, were seeking service jobs in hospitals, hotels, restaurants, or private households.

Few read want-ad columns in newspapers, even though jobs were listed that they could do and might conceivably get. Only 10 of the 15 youth were referred to prospective employers by the employment agencies, but only 2 of the 10 secured jobs through these agencies, and the jobs were temporary. Those who registered with private agencies said that they were "brushed off" if they "did not have the fee to pay in advance." Only 4 of the 15 had registered with PSES.

Only a small number seemed to have valid reasons for applying at a particular establishment, and were able to verbalize their reasons. Specifically, 7 said they had some experience and could describe the experience; 13 said they were interested in a specific job and could say why; 30 said they had seen or thought about the work as performed in the particular establishment and thought they could do it or learn to do it.

Why They Stopped Jobseeking

On this point the youth tend to generalize or rationalize. For example, 31 were discouraged (22 of the 31 appear to have been seeking work for more than 6 months; these averaged two contacts per week but had not produced even a day's work). Fifty said they "did not know where else to look" (36 of these had averaged less than 1 contact per month; 19 had made less than 5 contacts during their entire time of unemployment). Five became ill and were hospitalized but did not attempt to secure work when their health problem was resolved. Twenty-one had no carfare (all were being supported by the Department of Public Assistance); 52 of the girls became pregnant or had to stay home to care for one or more of their children. Five doubted their ability to work because of a physical handicap, and 32 were "away for a while" in a correctional institution.

Added to the above were "vague" reasons which, taken with the foregoing, have resulted in such youth being labeled as "aimless" and "unmotivated" and unable to assume responsibility. Thus, 26 said they "did not know why" they stopped looking; 89 "just stopped;" 77 "never really looked for work;" 8 filed applications with employers and decided to

"wait" for the employer to call them; 3 thought they were "too young" to work (none of these contacted the Employment Service or Board of Education to check this point); 8 were satisfied with occasional odd jobs and appeared to have been unable or unwilling to seek permanent work; 12 registered with an employment agency but did not apply elsewhere; 2 slept "too late to look for a job;" one was considering enlisting in the army, and one was considering returning to school, but neither boy took action.

Conclusions

Some of the major findings of other students of employment of disadvantaged youth were confirmed. The youth tended to have little understanding of concepts of success and achievement. They tended to view the existing occupational structure as irrelevant and without personal reference, and to view middle class goals as vague or impossible of attainment. They set up personalized goals which can be achieved, and they regard these goals as "good enough." They lack or do not view occupational goals seriously. Their negative attitudes toward work in general, and steady work in particular, result from their failure to accept an occupational role.

Occupational titles of jobs meant little to these youth. The number of occupations of which these youth had knowledge was very small. The youth's exposure to persons with real work experience was almost exclusively limited to those in unskilled, semiskilled, service and domestic occupations. Lack of knowledge about jobs and the job market, in part at least explains why so many youth restricted their search to a few occupations and industries. It also underscores why so many could not state a vocational choice or goal.

Most youth preferred to stay as close to home as possible. Some youth felt that the chances of securing a job were better since the prospective employer "might know" them and would be more apt to hire them. Several boys said they were afraid to travel through territories of other gangs. Several others "did not know their way around the city" and said they thought they might get lost.

In summary, a large proportion of the youth had vague and random jobseeking patterns. These appeared to stem from a lack of orientation to the job market. For those who were motivated to seek employment, aspirations tended to be realistic in terms of their own competencies and personal and social limitations. Aspirations, however, reflected a devaluated self-concept and a lack of any belief that they could escape the bonds of their environment.

Despite a general awareness that they needed training, comparatively few of the youth had confidence that an investment in preparation through schooling or training would pay off. This appears to be due, in part at least, to feelings of self-devaluation, discrimination in hiring, and to their inability to engage in long term effort for future rewards. The youth tended to live in the present and were unable to project expectations into the future, and defer immediate gratifications for later well-being.

Implications for Service

It seems probable that the deep rooted problem of finding and holding a job for a disadvantaged youth cannot be resolved through verbal means. In spite of initial counseling at the Employment Service, half the youth rejected the offer to enter the adjustment and training programs. The depth of the youths' problems was related to the fact that their development occurred without social guidelines and standards. Many lacked personal identity and a concept of anything other than relations and behaviors affecting their immediate survival. Absence of purpose or goal, in a sense, resulted in a bewilderment with, or a psychological withdrawal from any involvement with matters not tied to their immediate experiences. Their attitude was one of little hope or expectation of having a more fruitful life.

It is, therefore, an oversimplification of the problem to suggest that counseling and occupational information for these youth are enough. Rehabilitation would imply first a wide and intensive variety of health, welfare, and educational measures for them and their parents.

The depth of the problem is reflected in the alien character of the subculture, the constricted developmental and life experiences of the individual youth, and the lack of relatedness of middle class norms to their survival needs. The first steps in the youths' vocational development must involve a broadening of fundamental experiences through social learnings, which will enable them to deal with matters which offer a high sense of well-being.

The attitudes and conformance patterns to be cultivated must consolidate those healthy forces which can be made available within the home, neighborhood, school, and employing community.

The rewards of self improvement should be geared to prescribed efforts and related to achievement. Recommendations for sound jobseeking and vocational development cannot be intelligible or intelligent for this population until the youth are prepared through elementary experiences for dealing with them.

The experiences provided by the project will be described in the second article in this series.

Preparing Disadvantaged Youth for Work—II

This article is the second in a series that will describe the findings of a project designed to evaluate and prepare a group of school dropouts for training or jobs. The project was under the supervision of the Philadephia Council for Community Advancement, with services performed by the Jewish Employment and Vocational Service (JEVS) and the local offices of the Pennsylvania State Employment Service (PSES). Financial support for the project was provided by the Office of Manpower, Automation and Training of the U.S. Department of Labor.

During 1964, the Philadelphia Jewish Employment and Vocational Service and the Pennsylvania State Employment Service cooperated in a program to evaluate and improve the employability of school dropouts. Three hundred and thirty-one boys and girls between the ages of 17 and 22 who were out of school and out of work, and who could not be evaluated or referred to jobs or training by State Employment Service counselors and interviewers, were served by the JEVS Work Adjustment Center.

The JEVS process included situational assessment through the use of work samples, productive work, and intensive individual psychological testing of aptitudinal and personality factors. Evaluation was followed by a guided work adjustment experience to improve work attitudes and patterns for a period of approximately 8 weeks. Academic remediation and counseling (individual and group) were incorporated into this developmental process.

One hundred and sixty-five youth completed the evaluation and work adjustment programs and returned to their local office counselors. All were placed in competitive employment. The project also yielded significant information regarding their job seeking patterns, which was reported in the November issue of the REVIEW.

Counseling and Work Adjustment

SAUL S. LESHNER
and GEORGE S. SNYDERMAN

This article describes the JEVS counseling function. It should be noted that the youth served were, in the first instance, generally unmotivated and unresponsive to the PSES counseling. Because of limited verbal abilities they were unable to cope with the GATB; e.g., the average reading levels were at the 4th grade; arithmetic achievement was lower; more than half were classified as functionally retarded. The population was drawn from the slums of North Philadelphia. Cultural impoverishment, together with a paucity of economic advantages, resulted in a lack of motivation for work or school. Even though delinquency records could not be routinely checked, at least 36 percent of the boys and 33 percent of the girls had been so adjudicated by the courts. In addition, at least 30 percent of the remaining boys and 25 percent of the girls were known to the police. Eighty-three boys admitted membership in fighting gangs.

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These youth presented special and difficult problems to counselors. They represented a population which is culturally alienated from the mainstream of middle-class aspirations and vocational values. They viewed work as a punitive and not as a rewarding activity. For them, work was arduous and menial and offered neither wages above minimal subsistence needs (which were already met by public assistance sources), nor the opportunity to move up the occupational ladder.

Most of the youth had dropped out of school in the 10th or 11th grade after a history of chronic truancy. Academic materials were unrealistic in terms of their life experiences. They seem to have existed in a relatively primitive society in which the survival demands of today obviated their ability to consider long-range values. They lived primarily in the present, lacked planfulness, and were impulsive and unable to defer immediate needs for larger rewards that result from self-preparation and improvement.

Their limited and negative attitudes towards education and employment were reinforced by the home and neighborhood. Whatever brief exposures they had had with middle-class values were offset by the pervasive realities of their family and neighborhood life. Middle-class values, perceived only vaguely, produced reactions of withdrawal, frustration, or aggression. Many of the youth were unable to understand these alien standards and, finding no meaning in them, lacked any desire to meet them.

In addition to this "psychological blindness" to most of our middle-class mores the youth were generally unaccustomed to dealing with their own inner feelings. Communication with each other commonly touched on only

the superficial and the obvious. Their need to stifle profound anxieties and hostile impulses resulted in their building a protective shield around intimate personal issues.

Development Is Guided

The primary approach in the JEVS work adjustment process consists of providing a guided developmental experience through which the individual may integrate his emotional resources. He begins in a setting in which the demands imposed are within his grasp. Work tasks are simple, peer relationships are casual, and supervisory attitudes are benign and understanding. As the youth is helped to relate to these simple conditions, increased difficulties, and more complex work and relationships are introduced progressively. The youth is helped to develop increased tolerance for work and social stresses and to acquire the behavior patterns which enable him to accommodate to discipline and to cope with the demands of competitive employment. Eventually, the youth begins to feel more positively about himself and work.

The function of counseling in the work adjustment process was a supporting and reinforcing one. As the youth developed suitable attitudes and coping behaviors, counseling enabled him to bring to awareness the changes that were occurring within him. Periodic counseling interviews crystallized his feelings and provided a mental image of his new worker identity. He was helped to verbalize the positive and negative feelings he experienced, to express in words the values and purposes of working that he felt were satisfying. Thus, counseling helped him to develop a worker self-concept which clearly reflected personal status and vocational goals and the ways to achieve these goals.

Counseling occurs when the counselor can communicate verbally with the youth in terms which are meaningful because they relate to the youth's background and experience. Initially, discussions deal with matters and problems that are immediate and part of the present. There is no point in talking about feelings with a youth who is accustomed to ignoring his feelings. It is meaningless to discuss vocational plans with a youth who cannot project his ideas beyond the present. It is logical, however, as a first step to put into words what the youth is doing, how and with whom he is doing it, why he does it, and what more he will be asked to do. To this base of contemporary experience, a broader range of experiences accrues. As it builds and is brought to consciousness, the individual is enabled to grow and use himself more meaningfully. Further, as feelings of identity and self-worth emerge and are put into words, the youth's personality is organized and he is enabled to deal better with both abstractions and futures. In this way, the rationality with which the youth meets internal problems and environmental demands improves.

Most contemporary students agree that growth stems from a positive relationship between the counselee and the counselor. The relationship is made up of mutual respect and trust. It should be expected, therefore, that in a population with life experiences of rejection, mistrust, misunderstanding, and none of the benefits of middle-class society, the counselor will meet many difficulties and resistances to establishing a sound relationship. The counselor is apt to be viewed with suspicion, simply because the youth will not have understood him. The youth will alternately oppose, withdraw from, or try to manipulate, as he tests out the counselor's reliability, sincerity, and willingness to help.

In the environment of work, the initial relationship of the youth is with himself as he engages in the work tasks. It is the task of the counselor to unite and transfer the nonthreatening relations with the object world to the interpersonal relationships in which highly threatening factors of self-esteem and social value are involved. As a confident relationship begins to prevail, it becomes possible to particularize and discuss the youth's strengths and weaknesses. The counselor can now proceed to point up where development is needed and why the youth can benefit from taking specific actions. In effect, the youth becomes able to appreciate the fact that his present experiences are "paying off" in gratification and self-worth. Consequently, other ideas of personal development will also be acceptable as he continues. Such are the roots of motivation and counseling direction.

As the youth progressed through the Work Adjustment Center his occupational orientation was sharpened. His functioning as he "produced" was carefully observed and nutured. Industrial foremen, not psychologists, helped him deal with problems involving his work tempo, persistence, coordination, dexterity, quality, and quantity of task performance.

Throughout the adjustment process, individual and group counseling was provided to help the youth mobilize his energies, learn to cope with interpersonal relations, and make vocational choices. Counseling always related to the work situation. If, for example, a youth failed to meet the foremen's expectations in a particular respect, the youth was invited to discuss the matter privately with the psychologist. The problem was discussed in concrete vocational terms, e.g., "Would an employer permit this or might he fire you?" If this kind of discussion failed, the psychologist referred the youth to the supervising psychologist who used a more personal, subjective approach to help him develop insights.

Weekly Counseling

Individual counseling interviews and small group counseling sessions were held at least once a week for each youth. At first, topics and content covered personal matters relating to the immediate work experience. Eventually, these were extended to home, peer group, and social matters which, in turn, related to vocational development issues. As the vocational aspect became predominant, the realities of job-finding became the focus of discussion. Presentability, handling the interview, employer expectation were discussed. The youth was helped to recognize and understand that he might be rejected by many employers before he was finally accepted. It was indi-

cated that these rejections might not be failures on his part but were generally implicit in the normal job-finding process.

Counseling therefore was an accompanying and significant component of the evaluation and work adjustment process. It capitalized on the youth's present status and his new experiences. It progressed from impersonal to personal considerations and finally to matters wherein external employment conditions were separated from personal anxieties. Thus, near the close of the program, counseling was mainly vocational and designed to help the youth about to "graduate" to face and grapple with problems of choosing, entering upon, and succeeding in training or a job. To this end, both individual and group sessions were considered essential.

When these were completed, the youth was referred to the PSES local office counselor, with an understanding that until he was placed in either a job or an MDTA course, he should continue in the Work Adjustment Center several days a week, where a climate of continuing acceptance and the means of earning pocket money were provided.

The vocational program described here is an extended one by the standards set for most public welfare programs. It requires, in addition to the procedures described above, built-in methods to continue to support the disadvantaged youth's struggle to rehabilitate himself. Followup by mail generally fails. It requires that someone, preferably a knowledgeable counselor, visit the youth in his home. This is costly, because these youth are highly mobile and revisits are often necessary. Valuable help can be given on the spot. Incidentally, data can often be gathered to clarify problems and the value of services rendered. For example, JEVS learned that 40 percent of the youth followed up wished to continue in counseling even after they had found jobs. They were encouraged to do so, and even though the program officially ended January 31, 1965, each week several called to talked in person or by phone with their psychologists at the Center.

Not all disadvantaged youth are amenable to immediate vocational help. As indicated above, years of poverty, deprivation, and discrimination have created not only a "hard core" socioeconomic problem but also psychological and health difficulties which must be treated before the youth can be helped. Actually, 21 percent of the youth entering the program needed some other service before they could begin to think about and relate to the world of work. Counseling was used to help these boys and girls accept a referral to a suitable community agency for medical, psychiatric, or family case work services. Seventy-one percent of these did accept a referral and were receiving the services at the close of the program.

There is no "sure-fire, quick and easy" method to help all disadvantaged youth. Many will be able to accept and use counseling and other services available in the Youth Opportunity Centers of the Employment Service. But a sizable number will have severe emotional or personality problems and will require services such as those offered by JEVS *before* they can accommodate to and use the YOC services. The experience of PSES in Philadelphia clearly demonstrates that these youth can be placed in competitive industry.

Preparing Disadvantaged Youth for Work—III

This article, the third in a series, describes the work adjustment training given to a group of school dropouts in two OMAT-financed projects supervised by the Philadelphia Council for Community Advancment (PCCA) and conducted by the Jewish Employment and Vocational Service of Philadelphia (JEVS) and the local offices of the Pennsylvania State Employment Service (PSES). The first two articles were prepared by the Executive Director and Program Coordinator of the JEVS—Drs. Saul S. Leshner and George S. Snyderman, and appeared in the November and December 1965 issues of the EMPLOYMENT SERVICE REVIEW. *They discussed (1) Job Seeking Patterns and (2) Counseling and Work Adjustment of the disadvantaged youth. The March issue of the Review will include an article describing the placement activities for these youth by the Pennsylvania State Employment Service.*

Adjustment was defined to mean the youth's ability to meet physical, emotional, and mental demands of a training course or job consistent with his capacities, personality and development and his continuing motivation for training and/or work. The following consists mainly of excerpts from the Fiscal Year 1964 Annual Report of the JEVS on the adjustment program.

Work Adjustment Training

SAUL S. LESHNER and GEORGE S. SNYDERMAN

JEVS, a private, nonsectarian, nonprofit voluntary agency, established its Work Adjustment Center in 1957 to experiment with procedures aimed at improving employability through the cultivation of suitable work patterns and attitudes. Inadequacies of routine selection, evaluation, training, and placement for the special problems and needs of "hard core" youth indicated a need for new methods to assess and improve trainability and employability.

This program for out-of-school, unemployed youth lacking sufficient verbal skills and educational background to enter available training is based upon job sample evaluation in a workshop situation. JEVS maintains two well-lighted, well-ventilated workshops, one 15,000 square feet in a factory loft building, the other 10,000 square feet. Both contain work benches, fixtures, tools, time clocks, and a belt line used in both the evaluation and adjustment phases. Work areas were planned by an industrial engineer so that both individual and team work are possible. Space has been allocated for offices, storage, shipping, and receiving, as well as for remediation and for individual and group counseling.

Work, obtained by contract from private industry at competitive prices and in accordance with Federal wage and hour standards, was typically simple or repetitive. While it consisted mainly of hand operations, some contracts required the use of such equipment as staplers, heat sealers, scales, or punch presses. Jobs were broken down into basic components in order to fulfill the qualitative and quantitative demands of the contract. The young people were exposed to a variety of job tasks and situations. The pressures of the contracts were used to teach what to expect, accept, and deal with in industry. At the same time, they permitted the staff to observe the youths' adjustment to meeting actual industrial standards.

The purpose of the program was to show that with personal redevelopment, work adjustment training, and increased motivation, "hard core" youth could become employable and be placed in open competitive employment in Philadelphia.

Intake Procedures

Standard operating procedure of the Employment Service required all school dropouts with little or no work history or with vocational adjustment problems to be referred to local office employment counselors.

The PSES Project Counselor conducted an intake interview with a twofold purpose: (1) to determine whether the youth was actually in need of the program and could benefit from it; and (2) to instill in him a desire to take long-term actions that would result in his becoming occupationally competent. Where the youth appeared to be adequately adjusted, reasonably motivated, and possessed of specific occupational potential, he would be offered referral to an MDTA training course already in operation. However, where the youth's test scores were negative and/or his attitudes and values were such as to preclude the likelihood of successful employment, an effort was

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Individual testing.

made to interest him in referral to a Work Adjustment Center.

Acceptance into the program was based on the judgment of the Work Adjustment Center's intake psychologist regarding the youth's readiness for evaluation and willingness and ability to travel to the centers unaided each day. The psychologist interviewed each youth, took him on a tour of the Center to which he would be assigned, explained the program, and encouraged him to ask questions about the process and his place in it. If the youth indicated interest in entering the program, he was given a starting date, usually within 24 hours. Arrangements were made to interview one or both of his parents or guardians, and the PSES counselor was notified of his acceptance.

Prevocational Evaluation

Evaluation was incorporated into every phase of the project and changed in purpose and emphasis as the youth progressed through the program. Initial evaluation, encompassing 4 or more weeks of observing the youth and encouraging him to test himself on work samples, was concerned mainly with determining readiness for vocational help and the kinds of activities that will be of value to him. It was originally estimated that a decision regarding trainability and/or employability of the youth could be made in about 4 weeks. However, 76 percent had to be retained in the program for 8 to 13 weeks before a clear evaluation could be made. (Many of the group who stayed 7 weeks or less either dropped out or were dropped from the program.)

The psychologist decided the level and task category at which the youth would begin an established sequence of the tasks to be administered from selected industrial groupings. Whether the youth began in one occupational area or another was determined by personal or aspirational considerations, or on a trial and error basis to ascertain preferential work areas.

Before the youth began each task, the evaluation assistant explained its nature and significance and gave detailed instructions on how to proceed. He observed the youth as he worked on each task, lent encouragement, expressed those attitudes and demands agreed upon with the psychologist, and recorded times used to complete the task and behavior. If the youth seemed able to function on higher levels than those assigned initially, this was discussed with the psychologist. The newly identified strengths, if persisting, were incorporated as a series of new assignments, and the client transferred to a higher level of tasks. Similarly, adjustments were made if the level of tasks was too high. The youth earned no money in this phase of evaluation.

Grading of work samples extended over five levels, each of which represented a different degree of psychological activity involving intellectual and motor performance. The increased complexity of work tasks ranged from those requiring simple specific directions to tasks involving more complex directions, abstract reasoning, and problem-solving. Likewise, tasks progressed from those which can be performed almost automatically to those which required multicoordinated sensory motor activities. Work sample tasks were distributed within broad occupational categories, such as small parts assembly, packaging, sewing, building, maintenance, clerical, electronic, and auto parts repairing. Each level in a category may comprise several tasks of equal complexity.

For each task within each occupational area and at each level of difficulty, the trainee was rated for performance and accuracy and was observed for punctuality, attendance, appearance, frustration tolerance, learning speed, and psychomotor activity.

Some youth progress through work samples very rapidly and then tend to become bored if left on a fixed schedule. Others perform well on work samples but experience difficulty adjusting to real work. To improve the accuracy of the final evaluation and enable the professional staff to examine and verify the results achieved on work samples, the youth was placed on simple production tasks. He was again required to be careful in task performance, observe rules, be punctual, accept criticism and increased pressures, participate and communicate with other workers, and generally to meet progressively higher performance standards.

Minimal wages and automatic increments served as incentives for forming appropriate behavior patterns. Together with observing the client's reactions to pressures and more stringent regulations, they enabled the psychologist to evaluate the youth's ability to improve in such areas as personal and social attitudes, neatness, precision of work tasks, persistence, learning and adaptability. For some, wages were a stimulus to mobilize personal resources and function more effectively. Other youth failed to change their behavior patterns despite the payment of wages.

The weekly automatic wage increases during the first half of the work adjustment program tended to support and stimulate most youth and their productivity kept pace with their pay increases. However, others increased their productivity faster than their pay and a few tended to pace themselves and produced less.

During the latter part of the production program, the youth were paid the shop rate or the piece rate, whichever was higher. During this phase, the youth tended to earn status among his peers on the basis of his wage level. By the same token, the foreman and the floor psychologist used the earnings of the youth as an important basis for determining his

employability. As the sole indicator of employability, wages were sometimes misleading, however. For example, one youth was earning $1.25 per hour by the time he was in the tenth week of the program. At the same time, he was involved in several fights because he had been trying to "shake-down" other youth. He was frequently late for work. Despite his high productivity, he tended to cheat on his counts of work done.

Regardless of problems they may present, incentive rates are necessary because they represent the reality of many industrial jobs. Many youth were obviously motivated by them, although the exact degree and kind of motivation could not be measured. Incentive rates for many youth were more meaningful than the guaranteed shop rate.

Each youth evaluated generally spent approximately 2 weeks on work samples and 2 weeks on real production work. The actual time necessary to secure information which predicts ability to learn to work well and use vocational help varies from youth to youth. Some spend a few days on work samples and are evaluated on production tasks. Others spend 4 weeks on work samples and even this time may need to be extended for a definite evaluation.

When the results of both types of evaluation were taken as a unit, the psychologist had a rounded picture of the youth and judged if he could proceed with the work adjustment program or whether he was ready for skill training or placement. Evaluation provided a reliable estimate of general and specific competencies and a prediction of particular kind and level of vocational adjustability and was therefore continued in Personal and Work Adjustment Training.

Personal and Work Adjustment Training

The process initially offered a benign and permissive climate which gradually progressed to the disciplined, structured environment commonly found in competitive industry. The beginning objective was promotion of personal adjustment to the general work setting and helping the individual youth accommodate to the personal and social factors which, aside from production, are traits required of good workers. A generalized kind of personality integration was promoted. Variables most emphasized at this point related to the client's ability to observe rules and regulations, personal grooming, communication and behavior acceptable to others, and respect for authority.

The first level in the process was the industrial foreman's attempt to help by stressing work of good quality; teaching the youth to pace himself properly; emphasizing persistence; and stressing productivity, attendance and punctuality, personal responsibility, group goals, and reality factors specific to being an efficient worker. If a youth evidenced difficulty in any one of these areas, the foreman attempted to help him work out his problem. If the foreman failed, he referred the youth to his rehabilitation counselor, who tried to help him understand and accept the problem so that he could deal more effectively with it.

Occupational orientation was gradually sharpened and made more concrete as the client's personal adjustment improved. His functioning was more selectively production-oriented in terms of how he performed assigned tasks, as contrasted with how well he related to the general situation emphasized in the diagnostic phases of the program. Variables treated in adjustment training are work tempo, task persistence, coordination and dexterity, self and peer competition in output, quality and quantity in performance.

This phase of the project was administered by a supervising psychologist and controlled by counseling psychologists (rehabilitation counselors) and industrial work foremen, intermittently supplemented by vocational counselors. It was a flexible process for those youth considered potentially trainable or employable after pre-vocational evaluation. To help the youth develop a self-image of a good worker, organize his efforts and energies, and acquire suitable work patterns and attitudes, the process became progressively less permissive. Gradually, more insistent and structured standards of quality and quantity were imposed. Industrial foremen, at the instruction of a floor psychologist, introduced the kinds of pressures to be expected in competitive work. The foremen used prescribed techniques and devices to help the client learn to function more adequately. Individual and group counseling, described in a previous article in this series, helped on problems inhibiting progressive adjustment.

On the job in the Work Adjustment program.

Individual counseling.

Pilot Communications Improvement Project

As part of the work adjustment training program, a pilot project was set up to determine its effectiveness in improving listening, speaking, reading, writing, and arithmetic skills. The dropouts' severe lack of these skills makes them difficult to train for many types of vocations and may completely preclude training for some. Few had the reading and writing ability needed to complete a job application; some were nonreaders.

An 8-week course of three 1-hour sessions a week was established for two groups of seven trainees—those who placed highest and those who placed lowest on the screening tests and other measuring methods. Participation was voluntary and the group members were paid at their regular hourly rate.

There were indications, especially in the lower group, that negative attitudes toward learning could be changed. There seemed to be increased interest of members in both groups in additional training. Members in the higher group expressed desire to attend prep schools and complete their high school work. In final individual conferences, each trainee expressed a willingness to continue in the Center's program on a nonpay basis, if given the opportunity. However, the program did not affect the trainees sufficiently to enable them to transfer their gains to their overall adjustment. They appeared quite able to work in a socially acceptable job while at the Center, and to continue in antisocial, unproductive behavior elsewhere.

Experience in this program indicates that daily 1-hour sessions would be preferable, especially in view of the brief duration of the program. It would also seem wise to investigate the possibility of extending this type of program to on-the-job training or as an evening program after trainees leave the Center and are placed in vocational opportunities appropriate to their training and experience.

Most effective were those activities which related most closely to (a) the experience and cultural background of the trainees, (b) vocational training tasks currently being executed in the Center, and (c) enhancing the trainees' understanding of such things as withholding of pay for social security, income taxes, etc.

Observations and Conclusions

The following are some of the observations and conclusions drawn from the project:

(1) Traditional techniques of evaluation and preparation for work which are useful with the average unemployed or displaced workers fail with disadvantaged youth. New methods—youth- and problem-centered—must be used with these youth.

(2) Evaluation procedures involving the use of work samples and productive work were effective with disadvantaged youth in designating areas and levels of training and employment. It was possible to evaluate a majority of the youth who could not be evaluated by normal Employment Service methods. Youth who were rejected in routine examinations could use and profit from extended and individualized evaluation. Adaptability to training and work is least revealed in standard psychological testing.

(3) Evaluation, work adjustment training, and other remedial procedures must be tailored to the particular needs of disadvantaged youth. Tasks and procedures must be culturally oriented and acceptable to the youths' value system.

(4) Work provided in an Adjustment Center should be real and equivalent to work in private industry and, where possible, should be contracted from private industry and involve competitive standards.

(5) Wages should be realistic and based on production. Unrealistically high minimum rates tend to reward inadequate work behavior and stifle rather than promote vocational development.

(6) Individual and group counseling must be integrated with personal and work adjustment processes to help the youth work through emotional difficulties which hinder his entrance to and success in training or work; followup counseling is needed to reinforce gains made by the youth in the adjustment process.

(7) A substantial number of youth regarded as slow learners and borderline mentally retarded respond to and reveal average competencies in a work setting. Youth who lack competencies in basic skills, (i.e., reading and arithmetic) can be motivated to acquire these skills through individualized techniques in a work setting.

Much that has been written about the lack of motivation of disadvantaged youth is only partially correct. Dreary implications that they are hopeless and therefore predestined to failure are without substance. "Traditionally unmotivated," "hard to reach," "disadvantaged," or "hard core" youth can learn and will respond if there are persons who wish to help them. When these youth learn and understand, they become more accepting of and amenable to vocational treatment. They learn to handle time limits. Clocks are no longer "for squares." They report regularly and punctually for service.

The next article in the series will tell of the experience of the PSES in placing these youth. JEVS hazards the guess that the chain of poverty and dependency has been breached by many.

Preparing Disadvantaged Youth for Work—IV

This article, the fourth in a series, describes the placement activities of the Pennsylvania State Employment Service for 165 youths who had completed the evaluation and work adjustment programs in two OMAT-financed projects supervised by the Philadelphia Council for Community Advancement (PCCA) and conducted by the Jewish Employment and Vocational Service of Philadelphia (JEVS) and the local offices of the Pennsylvania State Employment Service (PSES).

The first three articles, prepared by the Executive Director and the Program Coordinator of the JEVS—Drs. Saul S. Leshner and George S. Snyderman—appeared in the November and December 1965 and January 1966 issues of the EMPLOYMENT SERVICE REVIEW. They discussed (1) Job Seeking Patterns, (2) Counseling and Work Adjustment, and (3) Work Adjustment Training. The March issue will contain an article about the dropouts from the project.

The Employment Service Cooperates

JOSEPH MESSICK

The role of the Employment Service was to select, recruit, screen, council, and refer suitable applicants to the JEVS for the evaluation and work adjustment parts of the program. When the youth completed the work adjustment phase, the Employment Service again took over for referral to vocational training or job placement.

Three local offices serviced parts of the area from which youth were drawn for the program. An employment counselor and an employment interviewer in each office were assigned to the project. These staff members were relieved of other local office duties in order to devote full time to the program and to spend as much time with each youth as necessary.

The counselor's duties were to select, counsel, and refer youth to the JEVS, to follow their progress, to encourage them to return to the program if they dropped out, and to plan appropriate action for those who completed the program. He consulted with the office MDTA interviewer with respect to those youth slated for vocational training. When the job placement phase of the individual's program was reached, the counselor advised the project interviewer and indicated the suitable field(s) of work.

The interviewer was responsible for assisting the counselor in selection, for administering the GATB to youth in the project, and for locating jobs when they were ready for placement. He also conducted followup with employers to determine how the youth were progressing on their jobs.

Any boy or girl interviewed who was judged ready for immediate placement or referral to training was referred to the proper local office staff member for service. Only those youth who met the following criteria were to be referred to the project:

Age: 17 through 21.

Education: Less than high school with no expectation of returning to school.

Work History: None, poor, spotty, or in occupations where there is limited demand.

Residence: Within the PCCA "target area."

Abilities: Difficult to determine through normal PSES evaluation techniques.

At the outset, it was anticipated that the selection and referral of the youth would be a time consuming process. Because of the background of the young people to be served, it was estimated that it might be necessary to interview as many as 10 youth in order to refer one to JEVS. Project interviewers reviewed all applications with entry codes in the active files in their offices for the purpose of calling in all youth who appeared suitable for the project.

However, selection and referral of the youth proved less difficult than anticipated. Acceptance of the program by those selected from the Employment Service files was much better than expected. As one counselor expressed it—"These kids, whose outlook is so hopeless, are ready to grasp any straw that might release them from a seemingly dead-end situation." After the initial call-ins and referrals, the publicity and recruitment activity of the PCCA among neighborhood centers, church groups, and other community organizations resulted in many referrals to the Employment Service from these groups. These young people were at least partially motivated to accept the program.

Instead of the 10 to 1 ratio anticipated, the counselor in the local office with the largest volume of referrals reported the following activity:

Called in	465
Counseled	227
Not suitable	40
Failed to accept	32
Referred to JEVS	155

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The experience of the counselors in the other two offices was similar. In all, 384 youths were referred to the JEVS and 331 of them entered the work evaluation phase of the program.

How did these young people fare?

Of the 331 who started at the workshop, 135 did not complete the program. The staff of the center determined that 45 could not benefit from the program due to physical or mental conditions and referred them back to the Employment Service as unemployable and untrainable. Members of this group who reported back to the project counselor and were interested were referred to other agencies for remedial service.

The other 90 youths who did not complete the program either dropped out or were dismissed by JEVS for various reasons. The dropouts were followed up by the Employment Service staff in an effort to induce them to continue in the program. These efforts met with little success, although some of the dropouts continued their registration with the Employment Service and were returned to the mainstream of applicants.

In all, 196 youth completed the program and were referred back to the ES project counselors for vocational planning; 165 actually reported to the Employment Service counselors.

Evaluation Sent to ES

For each youth who completed the program, the JEVS counseling psychologist prepared a detailed work evaluation report which was forwarded to the Employment Service project counselor. This report covered the youth's attitude, social behavior, adjustment to work conditions, level of ability indicated, and the type of training or employment recommended.

Although these reports proved to be a valuable aid for the counselor, they were used *only* as an aid. The counselor and counselee in no way were obligated to follow the recommendations of the report. The final vocational plan was arrived at as the result of further counseling interviews.

The weakest link of the project was in the area of training. Although 58 of the youth planned to enter training programs, only 15 actually did. A number of circumstances combined to make it difficult to enroll the youth in training programs. Attempts to develop on-the-job training programs were unsuccessful, as were efforts to utilize ongoing MDTA programs. As a result, it became more expedient to refer youth to jobs immediately in cases where training possibilities were not imminent. It was feared that a lengthy delay and resulting inactivity would encourage a return to old patterns and negate the progress made at JEVS.

These young people completed the evaluation and work adjustment programs of the JEVS and were placed in jobs by the PSES.

Although the PCCA made numerous contacts with employers in an effort to obtain job openings for the youth, placement success was due largely to the use of curent job orders and job development efforts of the Employment Service project interviewers.

There were 709 referrals to jobs and 252 job placements, with all 165 youth being placed at least once. Among the girls, 32 percent of the 102 placements were as trainees in such jobs as sewing machine operator, press operator, and tobacco cutter. Five percent were in semiskilled jobs such as spray painter and inspector. Sixty-one percent were in unskilled occupations, including candy wrapper, packer, and shipping and packing helpers.

There were 150 placements of boys—32 percent as trainees, 19 percent in semiskilled occupations, and 41 percent in unskilled jobs. The trainee jobs included assembler, machine operator, sewing machine repairman, and stock and shipping clerk; the semiskilled were as machine operator and inspector. In addition, six boys were placed in apprenticeships as diemaker, auto mechanic, painter, and upholsterer.

While these placement statistics appear impressive, we do not know how successful the placements were. Partly because of a reorganization of the Employment Service offices in Philadelphia, followup of the youth has not been completed. However, a JEVS followup as of January 31, 1965 indicates that 142 of the youth were still employed several months after the project ended, although not necessarily in the same jobs.

We believe that the fact that these youth were placed at all is is a significant accomplishment, since none of the young people was considered employable prior to entering the program. One recommendation resulting from our experience is that similar plans for programs should assure adequate provisions for training opportunities. More of the youth should have been referred to vocational training courses prior to job placement, but suitable openings were not available.

Preparing Disadvantaged Youth for Work—V

This article is the last in a series that describes the findings of a project designed to evaluate and prepare a group of school dropouts for training or jobs. The project was under the supervision of the Philadelphia Council for Community Advancement, with services performed by the Jewish Employment and Vocational Service (JEVS) and the local offices of the Pennsylvania State Employment Service (PSES). Financial support for the project was provided by the Office of Manpower, Automation and Training of the U.S. Department of Labor.

During 1964, the Philadelphia Jewish Employment and Vocational Service and the Pennsylvania State Employment Service cooperated in a program to evaluate and improve the employability of school dropouts. Three hundred and thirty-one boys and girls between the ages of 17 and 22 who were out of school and out of work, and who could not be evaluated or referred to jobs or training by State Employment Service counselors and interviewers, were served by the JEVS Work Adjustment Center.

The JEVS process included situational assessment through the use of work samples, productive work, and intensive individual psychological testing of aptitudinal and personality factors. Evaluation was followed by a guided work adjustment experience to improve work attitudes and patterns for a period of approximately 8 weeks. Academic remediation and counseling (individual and group) were incorporated into this developmental process.

One hundred and sixty-five youth completed the evaluation and work adjustment programs and returned to their local office counselors. All were placed in competitive employment. The project also yielded significant information regarding their jobseeking patterns, which was reported in the November issue of the REVIEW

The Failure Cases in a Vocational Development Program

SAUL S. LESHNER
and GEORGE S. SNYDERMAN

Rehabilitating "hard-core" jobless youth presents a number of difficulties to agencies engaged in counseling and placement. Recruiting and motivating these youth to accept and use vocational help is a long, arduous, and costly process. Many accept the programs and then drop out, while others are not immediately amenable to vocational service. Obviously, the loss of even a portion of these youth is expensive to the agency offering the services, and it is a traumatic experience to the young person who leaves the program feeling he has not been helped. These are the failures which counselors should not merely "learn to live with," but rather should find someway to minimize. But before we can design and implement a method for attacking the problem of holding these youth until they can maintain themselves in, and benefit from, training or work, we need to know far more about their reactions to vocational services as they now exist.

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This is a report of a study of youth who were referred to the Work Adjustment Center of the Philadelphia Employment and Vocational Service by counselors of the Pennsylvania State Employment Service, but failed to use the vocational help offered.

Of the 331 youth who were accepted into the program, 135 failed to complete it, 66 (20 percent) dropped out, and 69 (21 percent) were terminated. Although some of the terminated group needed services which were not available in the Work Adjustment Center, it may be observed that none of the "failure" cases actually could profit from a vocational service, even though it was individualized and custom-tailored to meet the needs of each person.

We use the term "failure" here to mean a youth who did not successfully complete the entire program. He is considered a "success" case only

if he finished his program at the JEVS Work Adjustment Center and returned to his PSES counselor for placement. If for any reason he quit or was dropped from the program by JEVS or PSES, he was considered a failure.

Virtually all disadvantaged youth in the sample, whether successes or failures, shared common characteristics and had histories laden with psychosocial problems. Even when these were readily apparent, JEVS psychologists could rarely state with assurance that a particular youth would or would not respond. All they could do was to apply a repertory of techniques such as individual and group counseling, work adjustment procedures, and remedial reading—and expect that a sizable percentage of the youth would find a success experience on which they could capitalize: Even then, there were 25 youths who successfully completed this comprehensive rehabilitation program but then did not return to the PSES for placement service. Since few of these were able to find jobs, they are considered to be failures.

We attempted initially to predict success by studying data procured at intake. However, nothing in a youth's socioeconomic or personal history yielded clues by which to predict success or failure in a vocational program except a general attitude that failure was inevitable. In approximately 8 percent of the 331 cases, this attitude could be detected at intake, and attention was given to helping the youth cope with feelings of inadequacy. Generally, however, this failure expectancy was masked and could not be ascertained until relatively late in the program.

Excluding those youth who had to be dropped for medical reasons and who entered a medical program, JEVS psychologists classified the failure cases into four categories:

1. Youth who typically could not relate to anyone or sustain an organized mode of behavior. Some of these acted out their problems and disrupted service for others in the program; others exhibited superficial conforming behavior as a means of testing or manipulating authority. All of the youth tended to respond impulsively and to seek immediate need gratification. They were oriented to the survival demands of the moment and were unwilling or unable to pursue long-range larger goals. These youth may be classified broadly as individuals with a character problem.

2. Youth who were highly immature, suggestible, and responsive to any diverting stimulus. They also lacked ability to make plans and could neither organize systematic behavior patterns nor direct their activities. They tended to "drift off" and had no "staying power." They may be considered emotionally and socially immature as a result of constricting and shallow developmental backgrounds.

3. Youth who were unable to tolerate any structured activity or restraint. Since by definition work implies a channeling of energies, these youth rebelled against supervision, worked sporadically, attended when the occasion suited them, and resisted any attempts to regulate and rehabilitate them. They had inadequate defense mechanisms with which to deal with their psychological conflicts, and were therefore classified as emotionally unstable.

4. Youth who could perceive no meaning in a work situation because it was not relevant to any of their life experiences. These boys and girls reacted inappropriately to work situations and demands, or they withdrew from involvement with them, or they reacted with frustration, fear or aggressive behavior. Like group 2, they were unable to cope with social or vocational demands.

The above grouping oversimplifies the dynamic aspects of their responses, but it offers an etiological framework for determining why so many failed. Their needs and problems were not always clear; reasons for failures were highly individualized, and differentiating factors were a matter of degree. The data which are presented and discussed do not purport to be specifically defined. However, we may draw some broad conclusions which may help us to deal better with the failures.

As mentioned before, of the total of 135 youth, 69 were terminated and 66 dropped out or quit. All but 4 of those terminated and 19 dropouts were interviewed at least once by PSES counselors. JEVS psychologists had interviewed all of these 23 failures prior to their termination from the Center, and the data from these interviews are used in this report. JEVS staff also interviewed 29 additional failures and 19 other dropouts. The results of these interviews were utilized to supplement the data obtained by PSES counselors.

For purposes of discussion, the joint findings of PSES and JEVS are grouped under the following categories: Male Dropouts (QM); Female Dropouts (QF); Terminated Males (TM); Terminated Females (TF).

The QM Group

Thirty-five boys, or 19 percent of those entering the program, quit (QM). Twenty-four of the 35 said they had to or wanted to go to work, but few really were so motivated or actually did look for jobs. None seemed to have been able to adjust to a job even when they found one, and not one of the program failures placed by PSES was able to hold the job. Consequently, we may infer that the failure of these youth in a vocational program is dynamically similar to their failure to adhere to a constructive jobseeking pattern.

Several youth who dropped out to go to work said that they were not being paid enough at the Work Adjustment Center. Individual and group counseling was ineffectual in helping them understand and accept the program's developmental or training aspects. Their insistence that they were employed at the Center reflected an inability to differentiate between work as a preparatory or developmental process and work as a means of earning a living. At one point in the program, JEVS staff considered the advisability of supplementing base earnings, but it was believed that allowances paid would not deter these youth from dropping out. Since their basic behavior patterns would not be modified, they would soon find other ways to evade program demands. Also, it was felt that if income is not correlated di-

rectly with effort, the incentive value of earning money would be diluted. This may be a controversial point, for there seems to be some indication that these youth are not generally oriented to amounts of income, except perhaps for large differentials which have symbolic value.

Eleven boys quit the program for the following reasons: Five were picked up by the police and detained for extended periods of time; four had chronic or prolonged illness; and two had family difficulties with excuses such as "had to help at home," "have to help my girl friend who is pregnant."

Generally, we were not able to check the validity of any of these reasons. Some of the boys who had been arrested and detained by the police returned to the Center to brag about their escapades, to create a series of difficult situations, and then quit when called to account. Most boys, including those who obviously were ill, refused to accept a referral for medical or psychiatric help. Of the seven who did, only three kept their first appointment.

The QF Group

Thirty-one, or 20 percent of the girls entering the program, quit (QF). Their reasons included personal responsibilities which could not be avoided. When a girl said she was dropping out to take care of her child because her own mother no longer could, it is likely that such was the case. It was reasonable, also, to expect that girls would have to help around the house, an activity usually not required of the boys. Nevertheless, personality factors such as those described for the boys accounted for 13 of the QF group. The other dropouts are as follows: Health reasons, nine; family problems, seven; economic reasons, one; and detained by police, one. Pregnancy was included under health reasons.

The TM Group

As indicated previously, 69 youth, or 21 percent of those who entered the program, were terminated because they were unable to profit from the vocational assistance. Forty-six of these terminations were boys (TM), some of whom exhibited the same modes of behavior as the dropouts.

Thirty-two of the boys terminated from the program said that they "could not behave," "could not get along with superiors," and the like; 3 said that they "could not do the work"; and 11 were ill and could not attend regularly. It may be assumed that the failure of a majority of the TM boys was psychologically based, since all were physically able to perform the assigned tasks. None indicated an urgent need for more money, although all talked freely about their own personal failure or their inability to use available help. This apparent willingness to verbalize the basis of their problem is perhaps the most significant difference between the boys who dropped out (QM) and those who were terminated (TM).

The TF Group

Twenty-three of the youth terminated were girls (TF). Their readiness to talk about their inability to profit from vocational help differentiates them from the girls who dropped out (QF). None dropped out for economic reasons; none was picked up by the police; but 12 had a health problem (including pregnancy); 5 "could not do the work;" 4 "disliked working;" and 2 had family problems. JEVS psychologists observed that generally these girls attempted to maintain communication with the Center. This desire to continue contact also differentiates the TF from the QF cases, and is a factor which may have significance in planning future programs.

Conclusions

For many of the 135 youth who failed, this project was the first time any vocational help had been offered. Despite its failures, the program apparently did reach and provide some help to them. All 135 interviewed by PSES counselors were asked what benefits they had received from the program. As there were no perceptible differences between the Q and T groups or the sexes, the data are consolidated. The responses were as follows:

	No.	Percent
Total	135	100
Learned more about work	42	31
Learned to work with others	23	17
Enjoyed a real work experience	19	14
"Something, but I don't know what it is"	17	13
Learned to take orders	4	3
Don't know	3	2
No benefit	27	20

Thus, it appears that at least 105, or 78 percent, of the youth whom we consider as failure cases stated that they did derive some benefit from the program. It is anticipated that some portion of this group may be reached at a later date, as they gradually become more aware of their real needs.

PSES counselors also attempted to learn whether some other service might be acceptable to these boys and girls by asking them to state what they wished most to achieve. Only 106 of the 135 could answer this question; the others said they "did not know" or "had never thought about the matter." The primary wishes of those who responded were as follows:

	No.	Percent
Total	106	100
Stay out of trouble	38	36
Get and hold a job	29	27
Acquire a skill	15	14
Become self-supporting	13	12
Get a high school diploma	7	7
Support my child	3	3
Learn to read or write	1	1

More than a third expressed an avoidance goal, i.e., to stay out of trouble, etc.; 60 percent stated conventional achievement goals of a job, a skill, self-support, or a diploma; and only 4 percent a practical objective of supporting a dependent or acquiring literacy. These expressions of aspirations also reflect deep-rooted anxieties and suggest a need for continuing intensive help, perhaps preceded by a thorough counseling effort. They also suggest that counselors must formulate new concepts and devise new techniques for penetrating resistances if they are to reach and hold these youth in vocational programs.

Dynamics of Reaching and Helping Failures

Whatever the source of their difficulties, it is evident that the disadvantaged youth who are vocational failures have many common behavior problems. Vocational treatments initially must be broadly therapeutic and cultivate a sense of mutuality and confidence between the counselor and the youth. The counselor must use methods which are organized and benignly controlling. The process requires patience and time for the youth to test out both the counselor and his new experiences.

Vocational treatments *per se* for these youth are not likely to be effective unless accompanied by work with the youth's family and neighborhood, to improve home relationships and secure the support of peers. Unless family members and peers understand and accept the youth's struggle to rehabilitate himself, and reinforce his motivation during regressive lapses, lasting benefits are not likely.

The psychological problems which the counselor must face as he attempts to rehabilitate the youth who quit or are terminated from vocational programs appear to fall into the following categories: Those who need a sustained, controlled, but protective program; those who need to learn through benign relationships; those who need therapy; and those who need to learn through new experience.

Youth in the first group may be viewed as "character problems" and represent the largest number who dropped out of the program. They are the most resistant to constructive help. The profound egocentricity of their responses and their intolerance for anxiety indicate a rigid defense system against threats to their self-esteem. Since they tend to act out their hostility, the counselor must be prepared to be the target of their latent and overt aggressions. Only by maintaining a firm, unchanging but protective relationship can the counselor help these youth expose their anxieties, acquire a tolerance for dealing with their fears, and develop a balance of emotional expression which can be used to further personal and vocational growth.

The emotionally and mentally immature youth make the most radical improvement when counseling and other vocational services are intensive and continuing. Superficially, their behavior is similar to those designated as "character problems," but intrinsically they need a systematic and controlled emotional and intellectual development experience. They are willing and able to accept help if it incorporates small increments of easily assimilated new experiences. Because these youth are easily distracted by more enticing activities elsewhere and tend to drift away in an irresponsible manner, they must be followed up and periodically brought back into the program. The followup and continued responsibility for these youth may be vested best in a single counselor who represents parent, teacher, and friend during the progressive stages of cultivating readiness for training and employment.

They Learn to Face Problems

Emotionally unstable youth require a long-term therapeutic environment and relationship. They are accustomed to using devious means to acquire satisfactions and commonly evade coming to grips with clear-cut goals. Intensive group and individual counseling often enables them to acquire healthy defenses against the stresses of work, and helps them develop healthier attitudes in dealing directly with their vocational problems.

Youth in the fourth problem group, the nonperceivers, resemble the character-disordered youth in that they require a learning experience in which new activities become extensions and enlargements of their own way of life before they can achieve understanding and purpose. They learn best when activities are initially organized around materials similar to their current life patterns. New perceptions are introduced best through small increments which the youth find within their grasp, and which offer them meaning and satisfaction.

On the basis of data collected at intake, it would appear that the disadvantaged youth who quit or were terminated could not be differentiated from the youth who successfully completed the program. Generally, those who quit were more elusive than those who were terminated because the latter tended to maintain communication with the professional staff even after they left the Center. Since there are no clear criteria for detecting failure by interviews, it would appear that sustained observation and evaluation of the individual's behavior in a work situation and his response to supervision, counseling, and remedial help are the avenues through which more accurate predictions can be made. It is noted that there was staff skepticism at intake concerning successful outcomes for many youth who, in fact, completed their programs and were placed in competitive industry. This further suggests that counselors need to handle disadvantaged youth with patience, understanding, and optimism for success.

Fit Programs to Special Needs

It is safe to assume that more disadvantaged youth who quit or are terminated from vocational programs want this help than are receiving it, and that many more can profit from it than currently are doing so. The problem of getting them to accept counseling and other vocational treatment could be resolved, in part at least, if the Youth Opportunity Centers would formulate programs specially desigend for these youth. Such programs should relate to the various underlying problems manifested in modes of behavior characterized by hostility, passivity, personal irresponsibility, inability to invert the self, elusiveness, impulsiveness, distractability, and the like. There is need for the YOC's to apply special techniques for prolonged and deep evaluations and for reaching these youth through peer groups, neighborhood organizations, churches, and schools, so as to provide more individualized and continuing vocational adjustment services.

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